

The Vineyard Workers

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference
Matthew 20:1-16

Church Season
Pentecost

Lesson Focus
I am first with God.



Tear here for easy use!

Gather (10 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Play Time Kids explore elements of the story.	Coloring Pages 	Assorted baskets, work gloves, artificial grapes, container of clean damp sand, toy cars and trucks, assorted coins, transparent tape, paper, unwrapped crayons, markers
Circle Time Kids line up for an activity as a way to enter the story.	Leaflet	None
Prayer Time Kids point with their fingers during the prayer.	None	None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
The Vineyard Workers Storytelling Kids pretend to work and get paid during the story.	Spark Story Bibles	Play money
The Last Is First Kids complete the picture with stickers and fingerprints to review the story.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	Markers or crayons, washable inkpad (purple or red), moist towelettes

Lesson At-A-Glance

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
God Loves Me! Kids draw their faces as a way to remember God's love for them.	Leaflets	Markers or crayons
First with God Kids create and wear a badge showing they are first with God.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	Ribbon, tape, gold or silver adhesive seals, kid-safe scissors, safety pins
Where Will You Go? Kids play a game pretending to travel on a road to tell about God.	Leaflet	Masking tape

Tear here for easy use!

Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Good-bye Time Kids review the day and say good-bye with a rhyme.	Leaflet	None
Prayer Time Kids repeat the leader's actions during the prayer.	Leaflets, Family Pages 	None



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content! Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find four downloadable resources for this lesson: a Coloring Page, a Family Page, and two additional in-class activities.

Gather (10 minutes)

Play Time

Before kids arrive, tape assorted coins to a solid surface where kids can work. Set the unwrapped crayons and paper nearby. Place the baskets, gloves, and grapes in an open area of the room. Set the container of sand on a flat surface with the cars and trucks nearby. As kids arrive, invite them to explore the different activity options. Demonstrate how to hold paper over the coins to make rubbings. **How many different rubbings can you fit on one page? Pretend you are working in a vineyard, picking grapes and putting them in baskets. Build a road in the sand. Where does it go? We are on the road to learning about Jesus.** Provide copies of this lesson's Coloring Page for kids to color. Be sure to help them put their names on their papers.

Once all of the kids have had time to play, invite them to help put away the supplies and join you in a circle on the floor. Chant the following rhyme to help everyone transition to Circle Time.

**Pick the grapes.
Do your best.
Reach and stretch.
Then come and rest!**

Circle Time

Welcome kids enthusiastically! **Hello, everyone. I'm glad to see you! Let's say and play a rhyme to see who's here!** Repeat the following rhyme using each of the kids' names.

**[Name]'s here!
[Name]'s here!
Clap your hands and
Give a cheer!
[Name] is in God's house today!
Hooray! Hooray!
Hooray! Hooray!** (clap and cheer)

Raise your hand if you pretended to pick grapes during Play Time. Allow time for kids to respond to that and the following questions. **We're going to hear about people who planted and picked grapes in our story today. Who made rubbing pictures with crayons? Jesus talks about money in our story today, too.** Hold up the leaflet and point to the icon on the front. **We're in the church's Season of Pentecost right now. What do you see in this picture? (road and tree) Who made roads in the sand during Play Time? During Pentecost, we are always learning something new. It's like we are walking down a road with Jesus. There's always something more to learn!**

Spark Resources

Coloring Pages



Supplies

Assorted baskets
Work gloves
Artificial grapes
Container of damp sand
Toy cars and trucks
Assorted coins
Transparent tape
Paper
Unwrapped crayons
Markers

Spark Resources

Leaflet

Supplies

None

Tear here for easy use!

Let's make a line and get a quick drink from the drinking fountain before we start our story. Help kids form a line for this or another simple, one-at-a-time activity. When you are ready to begin the activity, start with the last kid first and proceed through the line backwards. Have kids return to Circle Time following the activity.

What was different about that line? (*The last kids went first.*) **How did it feel to have the last kids go first and the first kids go last? Jesus talks about the last being first in today's story. Let's get ready to hear it!**

Prayer Time

Let's pray before we start our story. Listen carefully and use your finger to point up, and then to yourself as we pray.

Spark Resources
None

**Dear God,
You are number one with me.
I thank you that I am number one with you!
Help me to hear and learn your word.
Amen.**

Supplies
None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

The Vineyard Workers Storytelling

Gather kids in a circle. **It's time to hear a story from God's word, the Bible. Jesus told a story about people who worked in a vineyard to show how generous God is. A vineyard is a place where grapes are grown. Let's read the story.**

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles

Hand out a Spark Story Bible to each of the kids, and help them find The Vineyard Workers on pages 298-299. Encourage everyone to follow along as you read the story once.

Supplies
Play money (same amount for each kid)

Invite kids to play the part of the vineyard workers as you read the story a second time. Choose a couple of kids to start working before you begin to read the story. **Pretend you are working at the vineyard. When I have finished reading the story, I will pay you for your work.** Continue inviting kids to join the others at regular intervals during the story. At the end of the story, pay all of the kids the same amount for their work.

Let's talk about the story. Point to the picture on page 299. **What did the farmer ask the workers to do?** (*work in the vineyard*) **How much did the last workers get paid?** (*the same amount as the first workers*) **How did you feel when I paid you all the same amount after the story?** Accept kids' responses. **God is like the generous farmer, giving everyone good gifts, no matter who you are. I am first with God—you are, too!**

The Last Is First

Gather kids at a place where they can work. Hand a leaflet out to each kid. Put the rest of the supplies where everyone can reach them. Direct kids' attention to the front.

Who are the people in the picture? (*workers*) **What did the farmer ask the workers to do?** (*work in his vineyard*) Point to the worker on the left side of the page. **The farmer promised to pay the first worker one day's pay for his work. How long did the first worker work in the vineyard?** (*all day long*) **Use your finger to stamp lots of grapes above the first worker.** Point to the second worker. **The next worker worked part of the day in the vineyard. Stamp just a few grapes above the worker in the middle. How long did the last worker work in the vineyard?** (*a very short time*) **Stamp only one grape above the last worker.**

What did the farmer do at the end of the day? (*paid the workers*) Have kids place a sticker of coins in each worker's hand. Begin with the last worker. **How did the first worker feel when he was paid?** (*angry*) **Make an angry face like the first worker. The farmer paid the first worker what he promised. The worker was angry because the last worker was paid the same. God is like the farmer. God gives everyone good things. I am first with God! You are, too!**

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

Markers or crayons
Washable inkpad (purple or red)
Moist towelettes

Tear here for easy use!

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

God Loves Me!

Direct kids to the activity God Loves Me! on the back of the leaflet. **Name some of the people who love you.** Affirm kids' responses to this and the following questions. **Someone else loves you very much, too. Who do you think it is?** (*God*) **That's right! When we love other people, we do things like think about them, tell stories about them, and show others their pictures. Let's think about how much God loves us.**

Point to the picture of the refrigerator. **Pretend this is God's refrigerator. What do you think God might hang on it?** Read the statement with kids while pointing to the refrigerator. **If God had a refrigerator, your picture would be on it!** Give kids time to draw themselves on the refrigerator. Point to the picture of the frame. **What do you think might be in God's picture frame?** Read the statement with kids while pointing to the frame. Give kids time to draw themselves in the frame. Point to the scrapbook page. **Who do you think might be in God's scrapbook?** Read the statement with kids while pointing to the scrapbook. Give kids time to draw themselves on the scrapbook page. **Remember, God loves each of us very much. I am first with God—you are, too!**

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

Markers or crayons

First with God

Direct kids to the First with God activity on the back of the leaflet. **In our story, which of the vineyard workers was paid first? (the last worker) Jesus told this story so everyone would understand how generous God is. God gives good gifts to everyone. Like the vineyard worker, I am first with God. Let's make something to wear that will remind each of us, I am first with God.**

1. Invite kids to tape the ends of several lengths of ribbon to the middle of the circle on the page, positioned so the other ends of the ribbon hang down freely.
2. Have each kid place an adhesive seal over the ribbon ends in the circle.
3. Give each kid a #1 sticker to stick in the middle of the circle.
4. Help kids cut out their awards.
5. Use safety pins to pin the awards on kids.

God is generous. Wear this seal to remind yourself, I am first with God! Then give it someone else when you get home to share the good news!

Where Will You Go?

Use tape to mark the outline of a road on the floor, long enough for kids to stand along. Gather kids near the taped road. Point to the road icon on the front of the leaflet. **We are in the church Season of Pentecost. During the Season of Pentecost we remember that we are on a journey with God. One of the things we can do on our journey is to go different places and tell other people what we know about God.** Direct kids' attention to the taped road. **Let's play a game about going different places to tell others, "I am first with God!"**

1. Divide kids into three groups.
2. Have each group stand in a different place along the road.
3. Teach kids the following call and response rhyme.
Leader: **Kids, kids, where will you go?**
Group: **We'll go to _____ so they will know,**
Class: **"I am first with God!"**
4. Have one group name a place to go, such as **the park** or **Grandma's house**.
5. Say the rhyme with the designated group naming their place.
6. On the last line of the rhyme, the group runs to tell another group, **I am first with God. You are, too!**
7. Continue the game with another group.

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

Ribbon (4" [10 cm] lengths),
two or three per kid
Tape
Gold or silver adhesive seals,
one per kid
Kid-safe scissors
Safety pins

Tear here for easy use!

Spark Resources

Leaflet

Supplies

Masking tape

Send (5 minutes)

Good-bye Time

Gather kids in a circle on the floor. **Today we heard a story Jesus told to show us how generous God is. A farmer hired workers to work in his vineyard. Which worker was paid first? (last worker) Just like the worker, I am first with God.** Hold up a leaflet. **When you take your leaflet home, have your family read the Faith on the Go! idea on the back. There's a fun way to remember, "I am first with God," during the week.**

Before we go, let's say good-bye with a rhyme. Repeat the rhyme until all of the kids have been named. Give each kid a hug or high-five following the rhyme.

**Good-bye, [Name],
Our great friend.
God will be with you
Until we meet again!**

Spark Resources
Leaflet

Supplies
None

Prayer Time

Let's close with a prayer. Repeat my words and actions.

Dear God, (point up)

Thank you for being generous! (spread arms wide)

Help me remember, (point to head)

I am first with God! (hold up one finger)

Amen. (clap)

Be sure to send leaflets and Family Pages home with kids.

Spark Resources
Leaflets
Family Pages



Supplies
None

Tear here for easy use!